'TWAS FAR AWAY.

'Twas far away where skies are fair
And sweet with song and light;
When I had but my scythe, my dear
And you your needles bright.

So far away! and yet, to-day,
For all the distance drear,
My heart keeps chime with that sweet time
And dreams the old dreams there.

There, where love learned its sweetest words
And built its brightest bowers;
Where sang the rarest mocking birds
And bloomed the fairest flowers!

And fields were golden-rich, and clear
The streams flowed in the light—
When I had but my scythe, my dear,
And you your needles bright!

How soft and sweet across the wheat
Your dear voice seemed to roam,
When stars of love peeped pale above
And I went dreaming home!

Life had no sweeter joy than this—
To rest a little while
There, where you met me with a kiss
And blessed me with a smile!

So far that sweet time seems to-day,
Here 'neath these darkened skies;
And yet, across the weary way
You light me with your eyes!

And I would give earth's gold to share
Once more that day, that night,
When I had but my scythe, my dear,
And you your needles bright!

—[Frank L. Stanton.

A DAGHESTAN PATTERN.

Phœbe Jane Breck hung the little rug over the arm of the old hair-cloth rocking-chair, and Mrs. Ponsonby Ten Broeck gazed at it critically.

"It's a real Daghestan pattern," said the great lady, who was a summer visitor at East Palestrina; and Phœbe Jane colored high with pride and pleasure. Being only fifteen years old, and not the capable one of the family, it was a great satisfaction to have her handiwork admired by a lady from New York.

"You really have a knack at rug-making," said Phœbe Jane's older sister Eunice, when the visitor's carriage had gone. It was at that very moment, while Phœbe Jane was washing the best thin glass tumbler in which the lady had drank her cream, that a great idea came to her.

She did not tell Eunice at once; Eunice was trying to trim Pauleny Jordan's bonnet "kind of subdued," according to that lady's injunctions, as she was coming out with new false teeth, and was anxious not to look too "flighty." When Eunice had something on her mind was not the time to talk to her. Besides, it was such a great idea that it almost took Phœbe Jane's breath away.

If she could have told her Cousin Luella, that would have been a comfort. Luella went to the Oakmount Female Seminary, and knew almost everything; but Luella and she were forbidden to speak to each other, because her father and Luella's mother, Aunt Cynthia, had quarrelled long ago.

Aunt Cynthia's boys, Jerome and Albion, and Phœbe Jane's brother, Llewellyn, had always scowled at each other, but Phœbe Jane and Luella had wanted to be friends ever since the day when Luella's buff kitten got lost in Wingate's woods, and Phœbe Jane climbed a tall tree, in the top of which it was mewing piteously, and restored it to its mistress's arms.

That had happened long ago, when they were little girls; but ever since they had shown themselves congenial spirits. So Phœbe Jane longed to ask Luella's advice about her bright idea. But as that could not be, she allowed it to rest awhile in her eager brain, and then proceeded to develop it.

Phœbe Jane stole softly into "the shepherdess room"—they called it so because the old-fashioned paper on the walls was covered with shepherdesses, with their crooks and their flocks of sheep. It was the best room, the parlor; but although Phœbe Jane's father and mother lived in that house ever since they were married, the room had never been furnished.

They had always been planning to furnish it; that had been one of Phœbe Jane's mother's hopes as long as she lived, and now Eunice, whenever she was able to save a little money, said that sometime, perhaps, they could furnish the parlor.

Eunice had made a beautiful lounge for it out of an old packing-case, and Mrs. Tisbury, when she moved to Orland, had left them her base-burner stove to use until she wanted it. But Eunice said the great difficulty was the carpet—it was such a large room.

Phœbe Jane stood in the middle of the room and surveyed it with a measuring eye.

"Llewellyn will paint the edges for me," she meditated, "and it is very stylish to leave half a yard all 'round."

"Then we could have the choir rehearsals here," said Phœbe Jane aloud to herself.

The choir rehearsals were held in the church before the service on Sunday mornings, which was a very inconvenient time for those singers who lived away up beyond Pigeon Hill down at Wood End. These rehearsals seemed a little like profaning the Sabbath, too, to some of the singers; and, anyway, it was not pleasant and social, as it would be to have them in the evening. But it cost too much to heat or even to light the church for evening rehearsals; it was a large, old-fashioned church, and Palestrina was poor.

The Brecks had a large parlor organ; it almost filled the little sitting room. Mary Ellen, the sister who died, had bought it with her school-teaching money. No one else in Palestrina had such an organ, and Eunice had often said, with a long sigh, "How delightful it would be to have the choir rehearsals here, if we only had the parlor furnished!"

Phœbe Jane decided that if she had a "knack" it was high time she used it to accomplish something worth the while, especially as she had an uncomfortable sense of not being good for much.

Eunice was a famous housekeeper, and could trim bonnets so well that people preferred her work to that of the village milliner. She was so useful in sickness that every one sent for her; and she could play beautifully on the organ, too, although she had never taken any lessons.

Even Llewellyn, who was thirteen years old, and only a boy, could be trusted to get dinner better than Phœbe Jane; he could draw delightful music out of the old fiddle that they had found in Grandpa Pulsifer's garret, and could puzzle the schoolmaster himself when it came to mathematics.

Phœbe Jane couldn't play on anything, except a comb, and she was obliged to go to the barn to indulge in that musical performance because it made Eunice nervous; she said she could bear it if Phœbe Jane could keep a tune. And Phœbe Jane was very apt to be at the foot of the class at school.

Never mind! Mrs. Ponsonby Ten Broeck might flatter, but Eunice certainly never did, and Eunice had said that she, Phœbe Jane, had a "knack."

Phœbe Jane slipped away that afternoon without giving any account of herself. She called first on old Mrs. Prouty, who had been the Palestrina dressmaker for fifty years. Old Mrs. Prouty had the reputation of being "snug;" she had a great store of "pieces" in her attic, and she had never been known to give any away, even for a crazy-quilt.

But she and Phœbe Jane were very intimate. Phœbe Jane had brought up Mrs. Prouty's tender brood of turkeys, hatched during a thunder-shower; had always stood up for Ginger, the old lady's little rat-terrier, that was voted a nuisance by the neighbors, and had twice rescued him from cruel boys. Moreover, old Mrs. Prouty's niece Lorinda sang in "the seats," and longed for evening rehearsals.

The pile of "pieces" in Mrs. Prouty's attic was like a mountain of rainbows, and old Mrs. Prouty had so good a memory that she knew to whose dress almost every piece had belonged.

Phœbe Jane made two or three other calls, and before she went home the success of her plan seemed assured.

Eunice said, "I don't see how you're going to make a rug that's large enough," and "I hope you won't get tired of it before its half-done as you did of the bed-spread you begun to crochet." But she helped; Eunice would always help, though she was practical and saw all the difficulties at once.

Llewellyn got the Corey boys to help him make a frame that was large enough, and he helped to make the rest too. By dint of hard work it was finished and laid upon the parlor floor the first of December. As Phœbe Jane said, if you don't believe it was a siege, you'd better try one! A real Daghestan pattern, nine by twelve feet.

Then, alas! when the rug was down, and the parlor furnished, all the pleasure of the choir rehearsals was spoiled by a church quarrel. It arose as church quarrels and others often do, from what seemed a very small thing.

Old Mrs. Tackaberry, Aunt Cinthia's mother, had the old-fashioned New England habit of suspending all labor on Saturday evening, and beginning it again on Sunday evening; and being a very obstinate woman, she would knit in the Sunday evening prayer meeting. No matter how loud the minister and the members prayed and exhorted, no matter how loud the congregation sang, old Mrs. Tackaberry's knittingneedle seemed to click above everything.

Some people were shocked and some had their nerves affected, while others declared that "a mother in Israel," like old Mrs. Tackaberry, should be allowed to indulge in such a harmless eccentricity. At this time the church was divided into two parties, one insisting old Mrs. Tackaberry should cease to knit or leave, and the other declaring that if she left it would leave with her.

So the church was rent asunder. The supporters of old Mrs. Tackaberry hired the town-hall for their services, and a young divinity student for their minister. The funds that had been barely enough for one church were sadly insufficient for two, and there was enmity between old friends and neighbors. So Phœbe Jane said with a tearful sense of the futility of all human hopes, that there was "no comfort in *half* a choir rehearsal."

It was old Mrs. Tackaberry who had made the trouble between Aunt Cynthia, and her brother-in-law, years before, so it was not very likely that the Brecks would espouse her cause, though Deacon Breck who was a mild and gentle man, and never had quarrelled with anybody but Aunt Cynthia in his life—Deacon Breck said he "wished folks could have put up with the knitting, for he believed it was conducive to godliness to let *some* folks do as they were a mind to."

As if Phœbe Jane had not had disappointment enough, the worst storm of the season came on that Saturday night when the choir had been invited to hold its first rehearsal in the newly-furnished parlor. It was a rain, following a heavy fall of snow. The roads were almost impassable, and most of the singers lived a long distance from the village.

The town-hall was opposite the Brecks' house, and Phœbe Jane looking out of the window, saw that the choir of the new society was assembling in spite of the storm. It was to be a great occasion with the new society to-morrow; Jerome, Aunt Cynthia's oldest son, who was a student in a theological seminary, was going to preach.

But a great volume of smoke was pouring out of the doors and windows of the hall, and Llewellyn, who had been over to investigate, announced that "that old chimney was smoking again, and they would have to give up their rehearsal." Then Llewellyn, who was a strong partisan, and didn't like Aunt Cynthia's Jerome, turned a somersault of excitement and delight.

"It is too bad!" cried Phœbe Jane, whose soul was sympathetic. "Father—Eunice—don't you think we might ask them to come in here?"

Father Breck hesitated, rubbing his hands together nervously. He said he was afraid people would think it was queer, and if any of their choir should come it would be awkward.

Then Eunice suddenly came to the front, as Eunice had a way of doing quite unexpectedly.

"I think Phœbe Jane has a right to use the parlor as she likes, she worked so hard for the rug," said Eunice.

"Well, well, do as you like, Phœbe Jane. Maybe it's a providential leading," said Father Breck.

Phœbe Jane threw her waterproof over her head and ran out. There were Cynthia and Jerome, and with them a professor from Jerome's seminary. Phœbe Jane had a lump in her throat when she tried to speak to them, but behind, oh joy! there was Luella.

"If you will come and rehearse in our parlor—you know about my rug!" said Phœbe Jane; and then she drew her waterproof over her head again and ran back.

There was a consultation, evidently. Phœbe Jane heard old Mrs. Tackaberry's voice, and was afraid they would'nt come.

But they did! It seemed almost the whole of the new society came pouring into the parlor, and by that time Alma Pickering, and Jo Flint, and the Hodgdon girls, of their own choir, had come!

It would have been a little awkward if old Mrs. Tackaberry had not been immediately struck by the new rug, and begun to ask questions about it with a freedom that made every one laugh.

Soon they were all talking about it. Phœbe Jane remembered, as she had meant to, where she had put almost all the "pieces" of which Mrs. Prouty had told her the history.

Old Mrs. Tackaberry cried about the pink delaine that was her little granddaughter, Abby Ellen's, who died, and about the brown tibet that was her daughter Amanda's wedding dress when she married a missionary and went to China, and died there.

Then they all laughed at an arabesque in one corner which was Jerome's yelllow flannel dress—Phœbe Jane had been a little afraid to tell of that, Jerome was so imposing in a white necktie. Aunt Cynthia would not believe that she had let the dressmaker make that dress until she remembered that it was the time when she scalded her hand.

People kept coming in. Phœbe Jane had an inspiration, and made Llewellyn go and invite them. It became a good old-fashioned neighborhood party—"just like a quilting," old Mrs. Tackaberry said. Everybody found some of their "pieces" or their relatives' "pieces" in the rug, and smiles and tears and innumerable stories grew out of this.

The new-comers found the two factions apparently so reconciled that they were surprised out of any animosity that they might have felt; and when they came to rehearse their music it happened, oddly enough, that both parties had chosen the same hymn, and they all sang together.

When they had finished rehearsing, someone—Phœbe Jane never was quite sure whether it was Jerome or the professor—started "Blessed be the tie that binds." How they did sing it! Old Mrs. Tackaberry's thin, cracked treble sang out in defiance of time and tune, and when the hymn ended tears were rolling down her seamy cheeks.

"I'm going back to the church!" she said, brokenly. "I've sp'ilt my meet'n's and other folk's long enough. And—and—I'm going to do what I'm a mind to, to home, when it comes sun-down on the Sabbath day, but I ain't goin' to knit a mite in meetin' again—not a mite!"

There was a great hand-shaking; Aunt Cynthia and Father Breck actually shook hands, and out in the entry old Mrs. Tackaberry kissed Phœbe Jane.

In spite of the bad roads, there was a great congregation in the East Palestrina church the next day. It was the professor who preached. He chose for his text, "Blessed are the peacemakers," and every one looked at Phœbe Jane until she grew red to the tips of her ears.

She and Luella walked homeward together—openly, arm in arm; and it seemed like walking in Paradise, although one went over shoe in mud.
—[Youth's Companion.

Telephone Doctors.

In a telephone plant for a big city like Chicago there are cables containing upward of 30,000 miles of copper wire. Complete records are kept of the position of every wire, and the men in charge can pick out at once the line of any subscriber whenever it is necessary to inspect it or work on it. When a line gets into trouble it can be tested in both directions from the switchboard and out toward the subscriber's station.

At every exchange there is an official called the "wire chief," whose special duty is to overlook the making of connections between the subscriber's line and the switchboard, to inspect the wires, and to test them electrically in order to determine the position of any defect that may occur in a subscriber's line or instruments. The wire chief sits at a special desk, from which wires run to various parts of the system, and he is provided with electrical instruments with which to make tests on lines that develop "trouble." He is the ambulance surgeon of the telephone plant, and his wires give him the advantage of being truly ubiquitous. He receives complaints and reports of "trouble," and enters on special slips every "trouble" reported or discovered.

These slips are handed to "trouble men," who search out the cause, and finding it, apply the proper remedy. They then enter an account of what they found and what they did on the slip and return it. In this way a close and comprehensive check is kept on the operation of the telephone plant, which, on account of its complexity and of the number of small parts that go to make it up, is peculiarly liable to trifling but troublesome defects. Returns are made up periodically from the "trouble slips," and these form a continuous record of the efficiency both of the plant and of those immediately in charge of it.—[Chicago News.